

THE
CHURCHMAN'S REPOSITORY
FOR THE EASTERN DIOCESS.

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[VOL. I.

THE CHURCHMAN'S REASONS FOR BRINGING HIS CHILDREN TO
THE BAPTISMAL FONT.

(AN EXTRACT.)

"Except a man (any one) be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.—JOHN iii. 4.

IT has been a subject of dispute for some few centuries past, among the other questions which have unhappily divided the Church of God, whether the children of professing Christians are proper subjects for the holy ordinance of Baptism. And it is every Christian's duty to make himself acquainted, so far as his time and opportunities will admit, with the grounds of his faith and practice, and to give, when called on, a reason of the hope that is in him with meekness and fear, and also of the manner in which he expresses outwardly that holy and humble hope. Under a conviction therefore of that which appears to be due both to God and my fellow christians, whether they concur with me on the subject or not, I mean to state the ground on which I believe my own baptism, received in the time of my infancy, to be true baptism; and on which I bring my children to God in that way which I consider him to have enjoined.

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REPOSITORY, VOL. 1.

I.

I bring my children to the baptismal font, called by the Apostle "the laver of regeneration," because our Lord commanded his Apostles to "teach," (or make disciples of) all nations, "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." And as nations in a large proportion consist of children, I consider them to be included in the Divine commission. I humbly think that, if our Lord had intended to exclude them, he would have prevented all mistake by explaining his intention.

II.

I am further confirmed in this persuasion by the kind and condescending attention which our blessed Lord, the Author of the commission given to the Apostles, shewed to children while he was upon earth. For when certain parents brought their little children to him, that he should put his hands on them and pray; and the disciples rebuked those that brought them; Jesus was moved with indignation against the disciples for forbidding them, took the children

into his arms, and laid his hands on them and blessed them, saying, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God: verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." Matthew xiii. 19, &c. Mark x. 13, &c. Luke xviii. 15, &c.

But I consider that this passage not only discovers the condescending love of God our Saviour towards young children; but that it bears closely on the *manner* in which they are to be brought to him. "Of such," he declared, "is the kingdom of heaven" or "of God." This phrase in the Gospels and the Acts usually signifies *the visible Church of Christ here on earth*. Now if the visible Church of Christ on earth, consist largely of young children, there is to be supposed some door of admission for them into the Church; and what is that door but baptism? Admission into the invisible Church is by Spiritual regeneration as a change of heart; and admission to the visible Church, by baptism, which is the outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace, whereby we become meet for the kingdom of eternal glory. To both I conceive our Lord refers when he says, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.

III.

To this ordinance I conceive that the apostle St. Paul refers, when he attributes holiness, or a separation to the service of God to the children of believing parents. See 1st. Corinthians vii. 14.—I know not what his meaning could be, but that the profession of faith made by one of the parents would entitle the children to a participation of baptism, whereby they would be set apart for God and his service.

IV.

I am further confirmed in my opinion by the gracious promises of the New Testament, which extend to believers

and their seed, as we learn from the words of St. Peter where he is exhorting his converts to be baptized, Acts ii. 38, 39, "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." The promise is the promise of salvation; Genesis xxii. 18, and this the apostle says is made in favour of your believing Israelites, and your children; and not of you only, but also of the heathen who are afar off, (comp. Ephesians ii. 13, 17,) even as many among them as the Lord our God shall invite by his gospel to partake of your privileges. If the promise of mercy include children, surely the pledge of that promise should not be withheld from them.

V.

I believe that my children as such are capable of everlasting salvation. I shall have a good hope through grace concerning them, if they die in infancy. And if they are capable of that which is necessary to salvation, I see no reason for withholding from them that ordinance whereby the prerequisites are represented and sealed to them,—if they are capable of a place in the invisible Church above, I think they ought to have a place in the visible Church on earth.

VI.

Though no express mention is made in the New Testament of the baptism of children; yet we read of *households* who were baptized, such as the household of the Jailor, at Phillippi; the households of Stephanas and Lydia. I have no means of proving that these households contained any young children; but on the other hand it cannot be proved that they did not.

VII.

But that which, above all, establishes my mind in the duty of bringing my children to Christ's holy baptism is the direction given to Abraham and his descendants to circumcise their children when eight days old. For as the pass-over was a type of the Lord's Supper, so

was circumcision a type of baptism. (1st. Corinthians v. 6, 7.—and Colossians ii. 11, 12.) The covenant of grace under both dispensations is one and the same; and both circumcision and baptism are to be considered as seals of the righteousness of the faith of Christ. (Romans iv. 11.—and Acts ii. 28,) the blessings, viz. pardon, holiness, and heaven, are promised under both dispensations, the two Testaments being counter parts of the same deed of grace. The objects of the promise, and the proposals of mercy made in it were the same in both. A change has been made in the outward ordinances whereby the blessings of the covenant are represented, occasioned by the coming of Christ, the ancient Church looking forward to his arrival, and we looking backward on the accomplishment of his work; but the blessings themselves, and the parties to whom they are offered, are the same.

If then baptism be the substitute and antitype of circumcision, it should be administered to the same persons. And surely I am to consider both circumcision and baptism as being, in succession, outward and invisible signs of the same inward and spiritual grace, viz. the "circumcision of the heart," or "the renewing of the Holy Ghost;" and both as ordained by Christ himself to be the pledges of that inward and spiritual benefit.

VIII.

I bring my children to be baptized, because I am not forbidden so to do. For it appears to me that if Christ, the Divine lawgiver of his Church, had intended to exclude those from the privileges of the Christian Church, who had been admitted by his own command, through a long succession of ages, to the privileges of the Jewish Church, he would have expressly said so. But as he has no where said so, I must believe that the privileges of the children of christian parents are not fewer in number nor less in value, than the privileges of

the natural seed of Abraham. Our Lord's silence on the subject is the most satisfactory declaration of his will. I conceive that it lies with those who object to the baptism of infants, to prove the change which they suppose to have been made in the subjects to be admitted to the visible Church; and not with us to prove that a long existing practice ought to be continued. The Apostles, unless they had been forbidden, would naturally act on the same principles on which their forefathers had acted, and admit children together with their parents as members of the new dispensation of grace; and especially as their Lord had said "of such is the kingdom of heaven."

IX.

I bring my children to be baptized, because the subjects of baptism are no where particularly described in the New Testament. The command to proselyte and "baptize all nations," Jews and Gentiles, seems to include all ages. It is no where said, "Baptize believers only." And as no distinction is made, I conclude that all children of parents professing christianity are comprehended in the command, especially, as it is said that "of such is the kingdom of heaven."

X.

I bring my children to holy baptism, because tradition and the universal practice of the Church of Christ sanction my practice in so doing. I cannot find that, till after the Reformation, any doubt existed on the subject. All the notices we have in the writings of the primitive fathers of the Church are in its favour, though, as might be expected, those of the two first centuries are few in number, because the subject was uncontroverted, and their remains are scanty. The universal Church, without the exception of a single branch, or (so far as I have heard) of a single individual,*

* With the exception of two persons in the third century, who were for delaying bap-

from a period long before the introduction of Popish superstition into it, and through the whole period of that superstition, admitted children to baptism, as we learn from the writings of Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, in the year 253, from whose time the evidence is full and clear. The case is the same with the whole Greek Church. The newly discovered Syrian Church, on the coast of Malabar in the East, which was planted by the Apostle St. Thomas, and has subsisted from his time to the present without any subjection to the Church of Rome, and indeed without any intercourse till within a short period, with the Churches of Europe, is found to concur in this point with the general Church of Christ. And there surely we may suppose tradition to be pure. If therefore the baptism of infants be not true baptism, it will follow that the Christian Church was destitute of this ordinance, (except in the case of adults converted from Judaism or Heathenism) from the third century to the fifteenth, that is for twelve hundred years, even on the confession of those who oppose the practice. It will follow that the fathers of the early ages, the holy martyrs of the valleys of Piedmont, the Syrian christians, &c. were never admitted into the Christian Church by its admission-rite, that they were not (to use the words of our Lord) "born of water." In short, it will follow that the *visible Church as such*, became extinct soon after the days of the apostles, and was not revived till after the reformation, when some person began to baptize others, who had never been baptized himself. Though tradition is of itself a fallible guide, yet when it is clear, ancient, universal, and uninterrupted; its weight is very considerable; and in the case before us, this is its

tism in certain specified cases, contrary to the avowed practice of the Church: and of a few persons, about the year 1000, who denied baptism to infants, because, among other monstrous tenets which they maintained, they denied that any infants could be saved.

character. For no one will deny that the evidence from the time of Cyprian, that from the middle of the third century downwards, is indisputable; and no one will assert that there is any contrary evidence to be produced before this time. No one can tell us when this corruption, as some suppose it to be, was introduced; no one can find during the period I have mentioned, a dissenting voice. Now immemorial custom is admitted in courts of human judicature; and surely when the scripture is silent, it cannot be without weight in matters relative to the Church of Christ.

In the year 253, a council was held in Africa consisting of sixty-six bishops, of which an account remains in the writings of Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, before referred to. One of the questions discussed at that council was, whether infants ought to be baptized within two or three days after their birth, some inferring from the law of circumcision that they ought not to be baptized till the eighth day. By this discussion the council fully recognized the duty of baptizing infants, and the ground on which that duty is built, viz. the succession of baptism to circumcision as the admission-rite to the Church of God. Now though this council took place two hundred and fifty-three years after the time of Christ, yet it was not much above a century and a half from the death of the last of the apostles; and I need not say how easy it is to ascertain whether a custom like that has or has not prevailed during one hundred and fifty years. If infant baptism had been an innovation, it is not to be supposed that sixty-six bishops would have concurred in their decision, that baptism should be administered immediately after the birth of a child, without the least mention of a doubt concerning it. The question related not to the rite of infants to this ordinance, but simply to the time when it ought to be administered to them. On this circumstance an historian remarks,

"To those who say that the custom of baptizing children was not derived from the apostolic ages, the traditional argument may fairly run in language nearly scriptural. *If any man seem to be contentious, we have never had such a custom as that of confining baptism to adults, nor the Churches of God.*"

There is another point connected with my defence of my own conduct as a churchman, in bringing my children to the Font of Baptism, which may require a few words of explanation. But as it is a point of much less consequence in my own view than that which has hitherto engaged my attention, I shall employ but few words in justifying myself.

This point is the mode of administering the ordinance,—whether it be indispensably required that the body should be wholly plunged in water, or whether it be sufficient that water be partially applied to it. I cannot think the manner of its application a subject of much importance. The thing signified is the cleansing of the soul from sin by the blood and spirit of Christ; and of this the application of water to the body is the outward and visible sign; but whether a larger or smaller quantity of water be employed appears to me a subject of as great indifference as it is whether a larger or smaller quantity of bread and wine be taken in the other sacrament. It is not actual bodily nourishment, but the representation of spiritual nourishment that is thereby intended. Had immersion been the usual practice of the

Church to which I belong, I should have acquiesced fully in it, as representing a burial and resurrection with Christ. But as it is the custom of that Church to pour water on the body, or to sprinkle the body with it, I acquiesce with equal satisfaction in that mode, as fitly representing the various baptisms of the Jewish Church, which was chiefly by *sprinkling*, and that which is the antitype of them all "*the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.*" I remember that it was foretold of Christ, that he should *sprinkle* many nations; and that God promised the cleansing virtue of his Holy Spirit under the emblem of water *poured* on the body. It is not clear to me that, in any instance mentioned in the New Testament, baptism was performed by immersion or plunging the body under water. It seems to me more probable that the adult candidate stood in the water, when a convenient place was at hand, and that the baptizer poured water on him. I am told that the word *baptize*, signifies to wash, in whatever way the operation is performed; and the expressions *into* and *out of* the water might be applied to persons who had walked to a small depth as well as to one who had been plunged in it. The baptism of the Israelites in the Red Sea mentioned by the apostle, must have been performed by its spray, and it is almost impossible that the three thousand baptized in one day could have been plunged in succession by the few persons who could be employed on the occasion:

N. B.—Should the reader desire further information on the subject of Infant Baptism, Jeram's Conversations are particularly recommended to his perusal. B.

AN ADDRESS AT LAYING THE CORNER-STONE OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, WINDSOR, (VI.)

My Christian Brethren and Friends—

THIS day is a new era in the religious annals of this town. We have met here in this solemn manner, in a humble reliance on the aid of Almighty

God, to found a Church, and to erect an altar to the honour of his ever blessed Son, and to advance and to extend the influence of his religion.

Long have you been agitated by con-

fluctuating opinions in religion; tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine. It is now your design, and it certainly should be duly appreciated, not to invade the rights of any of your christian brethren of any denomination, unless your christian brethren of some one denomination, have the prescriptive right of determining how you shall believe, and in what manner you shall worship the Deity; it is now, I say, your design to form here an asylum from the various and discordant opinions of men; a retreat from their unhallowed controversies and disputes, where you and your children may enjoy the pure and evangelical doctrines of a venerable Church, and an ancient and sublime worship, and have the affairs of this little religious domain, regulated according to the regimen of the best periods of the christian faith; that, by the help of divine grace, there shall be one sanctuary where you may enjoy that peace of God, which passeth all understanding; that on one altar incense may smoke free from any turbid admixture.

Men of discernment have long seen that some remedy was necessary to heal our religious distractions. In the present disorganized state of religious society, every man seems to be left to follow his own fancy and as there are almost as many minds on this awful subject, as there are men, there exists the greatest difficulty of associating a sufficient number of one opinion, to sustain religious institutions, and to preserve among men the true knowledge and worship of God, and the incorrupted doctrines of his Son. One man you find an advocate for an universal and unconditional salvation of the whole human race; another for their almost total and unconditional destruction; one dislikes the catholic doctrines of a Trinity, the divinity of Christ, and an atonement for sin, and another will go into a minute and particular explanation of every mystery of our holy faith,

till he involves himself in absurdity and confusion; one holds so fast to his notions of a rite that he thinks it essential to separate from the whole body of christians upon this difference; one places the essence of religion in this notion and another in that; and from all these conflicting views, scepticism and infidelity is but a natural result.

You live, my brethren, at a day of peculiar religious declension. Men have become lovers of their own selves, lovers of their own interest, lovers of their own pleasures more than lovers of God; boastful and proud of their own conceits in religion; following their own absurdities, and sacrificing the cause of Christ to their self-will, their worldly interest, or their carnal gratifications. We see that pure and genuine religion, which teaches us the love and service of God, good will and justice to our neighbour, and sobriety of deportment, disregarded and neglected for some strange doctrine, some odd scheme, some new fangled rite, which men of fanciful minds have conceived, and by a misguided zeal are striving, by every means that can captivate public curiosity, to propagate. You thus see every thing around you unstable and given to change; sometimes a particular doctrine excites the popular whim, and brings together the curious with eager ears to catch something unheard of before; sometimes a remarkable preacher passes our streets, and all are drawn forth to hear the wonderful man, heedless of any good to be produced upon their hearts and lives; when the marvellous has ceased to interest the curiosity, this novelty gives way to some other singularity.

Now what is to be done in this exigency? Are our religious institutions to sink under these complicated difficulties? Is the sanctuary to be forsaken, and your houses of worship to be left to fall into ruin? Is the holy institution of the sabbath to be forgotten by your posterity

and every trace of religion to be obliterated? Or are we to depend upon those fitful excitements, which at one time heat the people into the ravings of zeal, and then leave them again to cool into a total indifference, and which are the fruitful source of feuds, of animosities, and finally of atheism? I see no remedy for these evils but in a return to soberer counsels, and in an effort to retrieve the faith once delivered to the saints.

We do believe, my brethren, that Jesus Christ revealed from God a religion to mankind; that he committed it to the care and defence of a ministry; that he declared he would be with that ministry to the end of the world; that the gates of hell should not prevail against it; that this religion has thus been preserved in the world; and that when by the lust of power, an accumulated load of abuses were heaped upon it, under which the Church was well nigh sinking, our fathers rose in the majesty of their strength and threw them off; but they did not aim to tear the whole fabric down. If God did thus reveal his will to men, and give them by his Son divine doctrines and divine institutions, it is theirs carefully to ascertain what he did reveal, and what he did establish, and at their peril they alter, add, or diminish. We must go to the understanding of the best men of the best ages of the Church, and not lean too implicitly to our own understandings on this subject. It was, therefore, an awful task which devolved on our fathers who reformed these religious abuses. They had most carefully to gather the tares from the wheat; and was there no danger that they should injure the wheat? They had to separate what was of divine from what was of human authority; and was there no danger that they might mar the institutions of Christ? Was there no danger that uninspired men as they were should go to excesses, and in reforming ancient institutions they should prone

too near? Was there no danger in the midst of popular excitements, that the unhallowed hand of passion should be laid too rudely upon the ark of God? They were aware of this danger, and they therefore proceeded with a slow and cautious pace, and with the greatest moderation, examining step by step as they went, and endeavouring to retain every thing of primitive authority, while they expunged human inventions, till they settled the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Church, as it has, through the goodness of divine providence, been handed down to us; and I would to God that it had stopped here; but the rage for innovation had begun and it knew not where to stop. Sect arose on sect, system on system, scheme on scheme, till the body of Christ, his Church, has been torn limb from limb, the existence of his institutions endangered, and the papist at least furnished with a powerful argument.

These are the considerations, my brethren, that have induced us to return to the soberer principles of the reformation, and for the support of these principles we are now founding a Church, where we may have dispensed the consistent and rational doctrines of the christian faith as they have been explained, illustrated, and defended by her brightest luminaries, where we may be edified by a pure, solemn, and sublime worship, not certainly the worse for its being in a great part the language in which the Church has in all ages sent up her devotion to God; where we may have administered a wholesome discipline not the effect of a giddy caprice, or of a rigorous oppression; not to worry, scatter, and destroy the flock of Christ; but one tending to preserve the purity of faith and worship; to strengthen the weak, to reclaim the wandering, to encourage the persevering, and to lead and stimulate all in the path to heaven; and may this Church, by the

blessing of Almighty God, remain to all generations, a city set on an hill that cannot be hid, diffusing around a salutary light and influence.

Our fathers of New England brought with them to these shores a deadly prejudice against the Church of their mother country, and they undoubtedly had *some cause*; for we none of us would advocate a connection between Church and State, by which the civil laws bind the consciences of men to certain creeds and rites. The Protestant Episcopal Church in these United States, I am happy to say, I thank God, is free from such shackles. Like the Church in her pristine purity, it stands on its own intrinsic merits without any support from the civil arm. We wish it so to stand. We ask no aid from the civil power to sustain a single doctrine, rite, or function of our Church. If it does not find its basis in the word of God, well understood, and in the history of the best ages of christianity, we are willing to renounce it. On the foundation of truth we wish our fabric to stand. It is a Church we advocate built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. It is this Church for what it is in itself, unconnected with worldly prosperity as it is, that we love. We would at the same time express no uncharitable views towards those who differ from us. We merely say what principles we will ourselves support, and would by no means judge others, but would leave them to their own convictions, and to the decision of that day which will bring to the test the truth and consistency of every way of religion.

And while we claim, my brethren, the enjoyment of the rights of conscience ourselves, let us see to it that we never

invade the same rights in our christian brethren of any denomination. May our great maxim as churchmen ever be — WE WILL ENJOY, AND WE WILL GRANT TO OTHERS THE ENJOYMENT OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM. At the same time let us ever seek the prosperity and happiness of that blessed land in which providence has cast our lots. Let us ever respect and give our support to its mild and benign institutions of civil government; and how happy must we all feel, my brethren, that we commence this work under such auspices; feeling, I trust, no uncharitable hostility to any of our fellow christians; no repugnance to our civil authorities.

These are in fine the views and considerations upon which we have commenced this good work. Go on therefore, my brethren, and the Lord give you strength and prosper you. “If the Lord build not the house their labour is but lost that build it.” Let us then look humbly to him for support, and he will be our castle, our strong tower, and our rock of defence. Through him the stone which is set at naught of men may become the head stone of the corner. I know, my brethren, that we are poor and contending with difficulties; but if God be for us, who can be against us. Our fathers trusted in God, and were holpen. They, when this country was small and beset with dangers built and endowed Churches; they were pious, prosperous, and happy; let us, in this respect, imitate their example. Do the work and trust God for the reward; and may this house be through many generations a monument of your piety; may it be to your children and children’s children, none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven; and may your posterity for this pious work rise up and call you blessed.

ON THE COMMUNION SERVICE.

WHILE we are kindly invited by our blessed Saviour to be partakers of his sacramental feast, and are thus permitted to express our religious adoration and joy, it cannot fail to strike every serious mind, that it is not among the least of our privileges, that we have for this occasion a service, which is most beautiful, impressive, appropriate and devotional. In taking the cup of salvation we can call upon the Lord in language, calculated to elevate our feelings, solemnise our thoughts, and throw an increased degree of sublimity over the Eucharist. Perhaps no part of our Liturgy displays so much suitableness, completeness, fervour of religious affection, and grandeur of thought and expression, as the form of the administration of the communion. Every thing in it has meaning and life and beauty. We would appeal to any one, that ever witnessed its observance, whether he could conceive an office more perfect and solemn. As for ourselves, our hearts have often burned within us, while we mingled in this service, so perfectly does its language correspond to our grandest views of the Redeemer's sacrifice and to our liveliest emotions of devotion and praise.

Our blessed Lord prescribed no particular form for the administration of the Supper, but left it entirely to his followers to adopt such services, as should be most pertinent and interesting. Accordingly the Bishops, in the first ages of the Church, ordered appropriate forms for their respective dioceses. These forms would naturally differ from each other, yet they had a considerable degree of resemblance, as appears from the liturgies of St. Peter, St. James, St. Mark, Basil, Chrysostom and many other prelates of antient times, if any confidence can be placed in the authenticity

and genuineness of the writings, ascribed to them. The importance of uniformity in the offices of public worship induced Osmund, the Norman, Bishop of Salisbury, and Privy Counsellor to William the Conqueror, in the early part of the eleventh century, to draw up the celebrated liturgy of Sarum. This became the standard of public worship in almost all the Churches of Great Britain, and is the model on which the reformers in 1548, mostly formed their liturgy.—Cranmer, Latimer and Ridley, with many others, were deeply engaged in this work, and seem to have bestowed peculiar labour and attention on the communion service, which, with very little alteration, is now admitted into our Prayer-Book. Of the various names, given to the sacramental feast by ecclesiastical writers, the *Supper of the Lord* and the *Holy Communion* are two of the most antient and scriptural, and have therefore been adopted by the Church. The feast has also been called the Eucharist, from the Greek word *Eucharistia*, which signifies *giving of thanks*, because the festival was one of great joy and thanksgiving. The place, where this sacrament is required to be administered is the altar, which has ever been esteemed the highest and most sacred part of the Church. It has therefore been customary from a very early period, even from the days of Constantine the Great, to separate it from the rest of the Church by a partition of net work or rails, called in Latin *cancelli*, and hence it derived the name of *chancel*.

The communion service opens with the Lord's prayer, which according to the Fathers was always used in the primitive Church at the celebration of the supper. Jerome affirms that Christ taught this prayer to be used at the sacrament and considered the petition,

"Give us this day our daily bread," as referring to the bread of life, the body of Christ, which they were in the habit of daily receiving. This prayer however is generally omitted, if morning prayer has been previously used.

The next prayer is a collect for purity, which is particularly proper, when we are about to commemorate the death of Christ, who shed his blood to cleanse us from sin, and when we are about to hear the commandments, the fundamental rules of human duty. As the Jewish people were sanctified, before the law was proclaimed from Sinai, so ought we to pray for the purification of our hearts, before we hear the law, that we may listen to it with more reverence and be furnished with more grace to observe it.

The commandments comprehend some of our most important duties, and are recited to us to lead us into an examination of our conduct. Let it be remembered they are the words of God himself, that they were originally spoken amidst thunderings and lightnings, and caused a nation to tremble, as they were pronounced. We should ever hear them with humility and form new resolutions of obedience, since the moral precepts of them are as obligatory upon us, as they were upon the Israelites. When we present ourselves at the altar of our Redeemer, and implore forgiveness and dedicate ourselves to him in a sober, righteous and godly life, what can be more proper than to hear the decalogue, to learn the divine will, to compare our practice with our duty and to be guided in the way of righteousness? The commandments were not introduced into the liturgy till its revision in 1552, when they were appointed to be read after the collect in the beginning of the communion service, to awaken a little more seriousness and consideration in communicants, who were observed too generally to approach the Lord's table without due solemnity and preparation. A short and expressive petition follows each com-

mandment. "It does not appear," says Secker, "that this form of devotion was ever used in any liturgy, before our own, but it is very instructive and edifying. They, who think that the confession in the morning prayer is not particular enough, have sufficient room here to supply the imagined defect."

Lest however we should be disposed to defend our moral character merely from a conformity to the legal code, the liturgy exhibits, immediately after the commandments, the system of morality, in which our Saviour has instructed us; a system, which embraces every moral and religious duty in *piety* and *benevolence*. The whole reason of religion lies in the love of God and in the love of man, and on these are founded all our particular obligations and all christian precepts. This statement will lead us to judge ourselves more closely and more perfectly. A prayer for divine grace to enable us to "walk in all the statutes and ordinances of the Lord blameless" very suitably follows this comprehensive exhibition of our christian obligations.

We now pass to the collect, epistle and gospel for the day. The collect is generally a prayer for internal grace; and the scriptural selections always have in them a remarkable order and pertinency. They are so arranged, as to embrace the most important incidents in our Saviour's life and the most valuable christian instruction; and the course of reading forms an ecclesiastical year from Advent through the Sundays after Trinity. The voice of antiquity uniformly proclaims that at the celebration of the eucharist, select portions of the New Testament have always been read: Those, which immediately follow the collect, are called Epistles, because they are generally selected from the epistolary part of the Bible. The epistle has been thus read for one thousand three hundred years, and the gospel much longer. The very portions, we now use, were most of them used on the same days

one thousand two hundred years ago and perhaps much earlier. During the reading of the epistle the people are permitted to sit. But when the gospel is read we are required to stand, to express our veneration for the words of our Lord, to show our readiness to execute his commands and our determination to follow whithersoever he may call us.

Thus far is the communion service performed every Sunday and Holy-day, even when the sacrament is not administered. Formerly the sacrament always made a part of the daily service, but for many centuries such has been the decline of piety, that we communicate now only once a month, and some Churches only two or three times in a year. However the ante-communion service is very proper to be used by itself. "Antiently," says Secker, "as well as now, they who did not stay to receive the sacrament, were allowed to join in the beginning of the offices, and from the middle ages downwards, the beginning hath been used, even where there was no sacrament, for a memorial, which might be useful, of the primitive practice."

To these services, after singing a hymn, succeeds the sermon. Preaching sermons on Sundays is as old, as christianity itself, and was much practised in all large christian cities as early as the second century. Justin Martyr, who lived at that time, gives a very valuable detail of the manner, in which public worship was performed. "On the day called Sunday, there is held a meeting in one place of all the people, whether they dwell in towns, or in the country: and the writings of the apostles and prophets are read, as far as time and opportunity permit. Then after the reader has finished, he that presides, addresses a discourse to the people, in which he instructs them and exhorts them to imitate the goodly things that have been read." It does not appear that any sermons were preached in the country parishes of the

Gallican Church before the sixth century; and so late as the era of the English reformation none were preached in England even at Court, except in Lent or on some of the great festivals. The discourses, delivered by the antient preachers were generally explanations of the epistle and gospel for the day or some serious views of the holy communion. Were this course taken more generally, it would doubtless be more consistent with the spirit of our Church service, and would tend more directly to spiritual edification. Our Church almost every Sunday calls us to some subject, suited to the day. Her object is to make every ray of her service converge to some one point, that she may the more powerfully illuminate and warm the soul. As for ourselves, we live in a blessed period, as it respects the advantages of religious instruction. From the English pulpits in modern times have flowed the richest streams of theological learning, christian morality and divine eloquence. Even in our new and extensive country there are comparatively few towns, where sermons are not preached almost every Sunday. In our larger cities, where the clergy are ably supported, we hear discourses calculated to convince, convert and delight the most intelligent and accomplished minds. Preaching, on its present improved system, must be acknowledged one of the most effectual means for enlightening, as well as reforming the world. Notwithstanding the preference, we would give in value, usefulness and interest to the devotional services of the sanctuary, we would by no means undervalue the importance of public discourses. With the judicious Hooker we esteem them, "as keys to the kingdom of Heaven, as wings to the soul, as spurs to the good affections of man, unto the sound and healthy as food, as physic unto diseased minds."

After the sermon, the minister begins the offertory, when the alms of the communicants are collected, and when are

read the beautiful texts, which so powerfully exhort to charity, to the relief of the poor, the support of the ministry and the comfort of the sick. When the Jews came before the Lord at the solemn feasts, they were not allowed to appear empty; but every man was required to give, as he was able, according to the blessing of the Lord, which he had given him; and our Saviour intimates that we should never come to the altar without a gift. The custom of making oblations at the sacrament is sanctioned by St. Paul. Certainly nothing can be more proper for beings, that celebrate the unparalleled love of Jesus, who gave his all, his life for us, than to manifest our love for our fellow-men, and to be actively benevolent in contributing to their comfort. If we wish that our petitions would ascend to heaven, we must not forget that they are to be borne on the wings of charity. Our alms and oblations shall waft our prayers, and go up as a memorial before God.

The alms being placed on the table, we then endeavour by the charity of our prayers to diffuse good, where our alms could not reach. Agreeably to the direction of St. Paul, who orders intercessions to be made for all men, we lift up our voices for all mankind, recommending them to the mercies of God. Nor can our prayers be at any time more acceptable, than when our benevolence is displayed by our alms, and when we are about to commemorate the sacrifice of him, who with his own blood is interceding for us sinners at the throne of God. The prayer for the whole state of Christ's Church militant is perhaps the most beautiful and impressive in our whole liturgy. It is not possible for any thing to be more comprehensive, affecting, and devotional. How proper is it to offer prayers for all men, when for all men Christ shed his blood? To the words, "Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church militant" are added, in the English prayer-books, "*here on*

earth." The expression "militant here on earth," was designed to exclude prayers for the dead, as such petitions were offered in the Romish Church, and to admonish us to pray for those only, who are yet fighting the good fight of faith. In this prayer were originally expressions, that savored a little of praying for the glory of the departed, and lest such a sentiment should be deduced from our present form, it is expressly stated, when we beg of God, that we with them may be partakers of his heavenly kingdom, that the prayer is only for those, who are carrying on a warfare against the enemies of the soul here on earth. In offering this prayer we cannot fail to be kindled to a high degree of christian philanthropy, a temper peculiarly valuable to all, who would approach the Lord's table. A form of superior or even equal excellence to this devout supplication is no where to be found.

The office next proceeds to the two exhortations to the communion; the one admonishes us to suitable preparation for it, the other repels our excuses, removes our scruples and draws us by the cords of love to our Redeemer's altar. The first exhortation is more generally read; the other is used only when persons are "negligent to come to the holy communion." Both of them however carry persuasion in every word, and it is wonderful they reach not more hearts, and make not more converts. The second exhortation seems to be the very breath of redeeming love.

These are general admonitions, given to all, who have ears to hear, to increase the number of the communicants. Another admonition is now addressed to those, who intend to celebrate their Redeemer's death, to enlighten their minds, rectify their tempers, and make them worthy communicants. It states the necessity of self-examination, the danger of receiving unworthily, and the benefits of a pious reception of the sacred symbols.

It also urges the necessity of faith, repentance, reformation and charity, and insists particularly on the importance of thanksgiving for our salvation. All these are very proper and necessary to be set before communicants.

Here follows the immediate invitation to the supper. It states the qualifications, required in those that are invited, the invitation itself, and a direction to make an humble confession to Almighty God. We must be strikingly impressed with the propriety of this order and with the solemnity of manner in which the sacrificial feast is ushered in, and by which the hearts of the communicants are excited to pious raptures, while they are filled with penitence and humility. What can be more gracious to us, sinful children, then the invitation "draw near with faith and take this holy sacrament to your comfort?" What peace does this breathe to our souls, and how good was Jesus to open for us such a fountain of consolation?

Having accepted the kind invitation to our Redeemer's banquet, we are naturally led to the contemplation of our great guilt and unworthiness. We feel ourselves too unholy to touch the symbols of the body and blood of the Son of God. How consonant to such feelings is that eloquent confession, which is the next form in the communion service, and which we are required to offer "devoutly kneeling?" What language could better suit the penitent? It is the breathing of a soul truly contrite. We see before us a bleeding Redeemer, whom our sins have crucified, and it is natural that those sins should fill us with torment. If our repentance be answerable to the pathetic form of words, prescribed for us, we shall receive pardon and comfort from the minister's declaration of absolution.

That we may have no doubt of forgiveness, and that we may be filled with a lively faith in God's mercy and with a blessed hope, four sentences of scripture

follow the absolution; sentences, which promise us pardon and peace, which are pronounced by Jesus, and which are enforced in the declarations of St. Paul and St. John; sentences which convey the sweetest solace to the soul, and remove all despair and darkness and doubt.

Having accepted the invitation to the supper and confessed our sins, and heard the declaration of pardon, and felt assurance of peace, the language of the liturgy swells into the tone of thanksgiving and joy, and becomes a sacrifice of praise. The priest then exhorts us to "lift up our hearts" and "give thanks to God," which words, with their answers and all that follows to the close of the trisagion, appear to have been used in the communion service one thousand five hundred years ago, and very probably have descended from apostolic times. The use of particular prefaces for the festivals is more than one thousand two hundred years old. The admonition to "lift up our hearts" tells us we must now entirely withdraw ourselves from worldly concerns, and elevate our hearts to God. Our reply is that "we lift them up to the Lord," and therefore, unless we are hypocrites, we shall be devoutly thinking of the sacred mysteries. We shall also sincerely acknowledge it "meet and right" to give thanks to God, if we consider the innumerable benefits, which the death of his Son has procured for us.

Then follows the hymn called the *trisagion*, which is a greek word signifying *thrice holy*, because the word *holy* is repeated in the hymn three times. The minister and his communicants, now considering themselves as in communion with the Church triumphant, break forth in this rapturous trisagion chant, and join their voices with the heavenly choir in celebrating redeeming love. This is the most sublime and animated composition of our liturgy and must kindle hallowed fire in the bosom of the coldest christian.

After this hymn, the minister proceeds

to the address, to be used in the name of all, who shall then receive the Supper. As we approach the holy mysteries, our reverence for them increases, and, discarding all considerations of our own merits, we throw ourselves wholly on God's grace and goodness. The priest with deep humility deplores his own and the people's unworthiness, trusts in the unfailing mercy of Jehovah, and fervently asks for all the benefits of the Redeemer's sacrifice.

When the bread and wine are made ready, the prayer of consecration is offered. This prayer is most perfect in its kind. It states the origin and object of the sacrament; in the divine language of its original institution consecrates the elements; solemnly offers them as the memorial of the body and blood of Christ; and then invokes on them the blessing and sanctification of the Word and Holy Spirit. All this is pertinent, necessary, interesting and grand. There is nothing in it, that savors of superstition, parade or unreasonable mystery. The bread is broken to show that our Saviour's body was broken on the cross; the wine is exhibited to remind us of his blood, shed for the sins of the world. The bread and wine are blessed to convey to the communicants the benefits of Christ's passion and death. Nothing can be more edifying and solemnising than this.

After singing a hymn is used the form of administration, which the minister pronounces, as he gives the communion to the people. This form is very ancient, simple, comprehensive and impressive. Every communicant, on receiving the elements, is required "to be devoutly kneeling." The bread should be received in the palm of the hand, and it appears to be irreverent and improper at such times to wear gloves.

Our Lord concluded his supper with a prayer and a hymn, and almost all churches have followed his example. We again repeat the Lord's prayer, for as

we have received Christ in our hearts, it has been well said, that the first words, which we speak, should be his. To this succeeds a prayer, expressive of praise and thanksgiving, of our joyful sense of the benefits of the sacrament, and of our earnest desire to be true and worthy members of the catholic Church.

All the communicants now rise from their knees to join in the Gloria in Excelsis, a most animated hymn, which is thought to have been composed in the second century, and was introduced into the church service more than a thousand years since. It is very delightful to us, after having passed through the communion service, and it affords a fine field for the indulgence of our rapture and gratitude. The benediction closes the service, is chiefly taken from the scriptures, and is a solemn supplication for the knowledge and love of God and his Son, and for the richest benedictions from the ever blessed Trinity.

Such is our communion service; and it is hoped that this exposition and commendation of it will not prove altogether uninteresting and unprofitable. But before closing this subject we would suggest one reason, why this office is so little known and admired, and why the number of communicants is so few. The clergy are in the habit of dismissing their congregations before the sacrament is administered; and the rite is celebrated only before the communicants. The rest of the parishioners, learning from their childhood that they have nothing to do with the feast, leave the recipients to themselves and return home. Many have passed the middle age of life without having ever witnessed the celebration of the supper. Is it then to be wondered at, that the majesty of the eucharistical service is so little known, and that so little interest is felt in it? Would it not be proper for those who are *not* communicants, as well as for those who are, to remain in the church during the observance of this rite, and

to countenance it by their presence, if they cannot by their reception of it? If we reason at all on the case, it certainly seems to be very improper, that at the celebration of the grandest service, that the mind can contemplate, and which is best calculated to fill us with devotional and sublime feelings, we should send the greatest part of our congregations to their homes. At a time, when they are most likely to be benefited, we dismiss them from the sanctuary. This makes them unacquainted with the sacramental service, and renders it so formidable to them. If a different course were adopted, if the parishioners remained in their pews, till the eucharist was concluded, we should not have so much reason to deplore the fewness of our commu-

nicants. The service would soon make its impression on the hearts and minds of many, and more would find a saving interest in their Redeemer's blood.

Let all, who are in full communion with the church, duly estimate their great privileges. With so admirable an office to quicken their devotions at the altar of their Redeemer, it will be their condemnation, if they carelessly and undevoutly partake of the Supper. We always feel grateful to the compilers of our Liturgy, but never more so, than when commemorating the death of Christ. Our language then seems to approach to inspiration; and we almost feel an assurance that a right use of our communion service will qualify us to be members of the church of God on high.

ON PRAYER MEETINGS.

The following observations on a subject of considerable interest proceed from high authority; and bating some obscurity in the style, and some allusions to the expressions of an opponent, to which this essay is designed, as a reply, they will be read with general attention and pleasure.

[From the *Washington Repertory*.]

IN the *Christian Journal* of September and October, 1819, published in New York, there was an essay on Religious Societies and Prayer Meetings; which drew forth some remarks in the *Repertory* of November, 1819, and March, 1820. Of the latter publication, the following notice is now taken. It does not *profess* to be an answer to the other: but the design is evident from the exactness of the quotations, and from their being between inverted commas.

The essay begins with defining the species of society intended: it being, "when there is a bringing together of a select portion of a congregation, under the exercise of a mode of worship unknown in the institutions of the Church to which such a religious party belong.

It was further stated that there may be religious societies eminently laudable, and that it would be unchristian to interdict the instituting of them, with a view to religious information, and the excitement of religious affections." With these statements before the author of the answer, he began his strictures with announcing [p. 122,] that in his advocated societies, "the highest reverence is paid to our evangelical liturgy; and there is a strict observance of that canon which directs, that before all sermons and lectures, no prayers shall be offered but those which are set forth in the book of Common Prayer." This is not the sort of societies which the Essayist had called in question. He had never heard of a society of this description in the United States. The Answerer alludes to such a society in one of our largest cities. It must have been conducted with great secrecy if it was, or is in the city of which the Essayist is a resident.

But, however occupied by the liturgy, the societies within the sphere of the Answerer, he knows of others [p. 231.] in which they are promoted by "extempore exhortations and prayers;" and he anticipates the time, with a fervent prayer for the hastening of it, "when ministers and people shall, with one heart and one voice commend and support these nurseries of our communion"—of course to the suspending of those, supposing them to exist, in which the liturgy is the established order. It is to the disadvantage of the Essayist and of his argument, that this declaration is made in a number of the Repertory four months later than that in which the other extract is contained. It may be supposed that had they been in the same number, few readers are so careless as not to have perceived the inconsistency. Perhaps the vacillation of the Answerer between societies of such opposite descriptions may have been brought to its proper bearing in the number of the Repertory for May, if written by the same hand. It copies a commendation of certain religious societies from the preface to Mr. Nelson's work 'on the feasts and fasts of the Church;' which societies, the author of that paper considers "as very similar to those now under consideration." If this be so, they are such as the Essayist never intended to find fault with: but if the similarity should be proved, he will have to lament the misinformation under which he has all along laboured. It is but to read the said preface to perceive, of the societies spoken of by that pious and sensible man, that they were conducted on a plan very different from that of the societies which the Essayist had brought into question. If any one wishes for a further knowledge of the former, it may be found in Bishop Burnet's History of his own times, vol. 3, p. 438; where they are described in entire consistency with Mr. Nelson's account of them, but more at large. Bishop Burnet represents them as dis-

tinguished alike by their charities, and by strict compliance with forms of prayer; and as the source from which there issued those great streams of religious benefit, the Society for promoting christian knowledge, and the Society for propagating the gospel in foreign parts.

Here, the Essayist might with propriety drop the subject; but there are a few matters in the answer which he wishes to notice briefly.

First. The Answerer is astonished that censures should be cast on Prayer Meetings, without condemnation of the many associations formed for literary, commercial, and political purposes.—Who would have expected such a remark, in answer to an essay which began with noticing institutions such as these, and that it must be at least as laudable to form others, for religious exercise and edification?

Secondly. Concerning the position of the Essayist, that the institution referred to, is in effect to form a Church within a Church; it is alleged, that all are welcome to attend. But the Essayist proceeded on the notorious fact, that there are many pious people who do not think it their duty to attend; and that on this account, they are considered by the others as defective in religious character. The mention of barns and school-houses has been misunderstood, it is hoped, by the Answerer. No doubt was entertained, that divine worship, in such places, may be as acceptable as from consecrated and magnificent Churches. The fault found, was grounded on a distinction made on the other side, of submission to prescribed order in the latter, and of emancipation from it on the other. This was the incongruity noticed; and the notice of it was rather in favour of the places spoken of, than otherwise.

Thirdly. In answer to the charge of Pharisaism, it is alleged, [p. 120.] that the Pharisees were celebrated for "strict and punctilious regard to the

letter and outward ceremonies of the laws, to the neglect of inward purity and practical morality." In comparisons it is sufficient, that the resemblance holds as to the point in question. That point is a tie of association designating them a religious body, and carrying with it the professions of extraordinary sanctity. While our Saviour respected the divinely instituted priesthood, although filled by unworthy persons, he held that self-created body in light estimation. The Essayist had no design of drawing a comparison between those who frequent, and those who absent themselves from the societies in question, in regard to the possession of a really religious character. The Answerer decides in favour of the latter, so far as concerns "an inward work of divine grace on the heart." But if, by those terms, he means the possession of the graces which come under the heads of 'all goodness, and righteousness, and truth;' and if, as reason requires, the question be limited to professors of religion; the ground of the preference given, has not fallen under the observation of the Essayist. As to what is said of the Pharisees, it does not appear that they denied 'the work of grace on the heart.' On the contrary, Josephus testifies, that they ascribed all goodness to the influence of the Holy Spirit; and with this agrees our Saviour's account of the man of that sect who 'thanked God,' thus confessing himself indebted to divine grace 'that he was not as other men.' There have been Pharisees like him in every age, and the fault is not in their creed, but in their cast of character.

Fourthly. In reference to the positions that the species of meetings in question contain in themselves the seeds of their dissolution, it is asked, Why then so much labour to suppress them? Different people may give different answers. The Essayist says that he never bestowed what can properly be called labour to the effect; it being contrary

to the views taken by him of the subject. That he was drawn to open his mind concerning it in point, was owing to an official determination, the dictate of his conscience, not to have an agency in any mission, under which it should be understood, that the missionary, although performing divine worship in the Church agreeably to the service, would hold meetings on a totally opposite plan in some other place. The determination had been misunderstood; and therefore, there was a call for the giving of the ground of it. The seeds of dissolution spoken of, ought, perhaps, to have been accompanied by the qualification that an institution may remain while the attendants on it vary; the more respectable, in time, discovering causes of discontinuance. The Essayist has been misinformed, if an investigation of characters would not favour this distinction.

Fifthly. Such meetings were said to be a cause of secession from the Church. The fact is so, and many instances might be produced. One of them is to be found in the life of Mr. Jarratt, by himself, a work already adverted to, both in the essay and in the answer. From the narrative, it would seem of the far greater number of his followers, that they conceived of extemporary prayer as better suited than forms, to the devotion of the heart. But the Answerer has known instances in which people abandoned the Church, after having had a pastor favouring such meetings, on his being succeeded by one who disallowed them. It is probable, and the reason may have been, that the first pastor had prepared their minds for it, by the exertion of his influence in favour of practices not in harmony with the obligations assumed at his ordination.

Sixthly. It was stated, that the societies in question had, in some instances, prepared persons for licentiousness. The meaning may evidently be perceived to be, that having been taught to place religion too much in evanescent feelings,

they have been acted on by a law of our nature, which causes to pass from one species of susceptibility to another diverse from it. The Answerer thinks, that to expect the belief of this, is to calculate on a great measure of credulity. On the other hand, the Essayist is persuaded, that it agrees with a correct view of the human character, and that deplorable instances of it occur. In the cases contemplated, there is no deliberate hypocrisy; but it is here contended, that when divine love, instead of being conceived of as existing in proportion to its command over the affections in habit and in act, is measured by the scale of the excitement of the imagination and of the mechanical organization, it may not only consist with animal love of a faulty kind, but prepare for its seductions. In endeavours for the excitement of sensibilities independent on religious sentiment, dramatists and poets know how to avail themselves of this law of our nature, and we cannot but carry with us into the department of religion, those properties of the human character which are good or bad, only according to the object on which they are exercised. It would be a mistaking of what is here said, to apply it individually; or to suppose, that the principle affirmed has, of course, an operation on every character. It is pointed out as a source of temptation; but we know of every species of temptation, that it may be counteracted, in any particular case, by the more potent operation of a better principle—the fear of God. It is not unnecessary, on that account, to guard men against the putting of themselves in the way of temptation.

Further, the Essayist is aware, that under every species of profession, there will be pretenders. It is, therefore, a circumstance by which none besides the guilty should be impeached. But what he has to lament, is, that when there are grievous deviations from moral rectitude in professors of the species now in ques-

tion, persons of the same description as to profession, but against whom no charge can be brought as to morals, and merely in consequence of mistaken views of religious character entertained by them, make allowances prejudicial to the cause of moral rectitude. They find it difficult to believe, that where sensibilities are at times powerfully excited by religious truth, there can be at other times the indulgence of guilty passion. Accordingly they permit strong indications of the latter, to dwindle in their estimation into the ordinary infirmities of nature: whereas, the other may subsist, without a particle of the ascendancy of divine grace over the affections. For the clearer opening of the meaning, let there be reference to the subject of auricular confession, and the attendant absolution. Protestants remark that the institution has the effect of countenancing sin, by the periodical returns of a cleansing sponge. To what extent the remark is just, is nothing to the purpose, which is mere illustration; for it is here contended, that occasional returns of a high excitement of animal sensibility, have the same effect in some persons. A preacher of morals, who sees the two subjects in the point of view stated, is bound to caution against either of them, as circumstances may require; and he ought not to be restrained from this by the apprehension of his being understood to throw out personal reproach; it being certain, in regard to both the subjects, that there are many free from the contamination of which they run the hazard.

Seventhly. The Answerer takes offence at the disrespect shown under the terms—"a fry of young striplings," and their being "drilled to utterance in prayer." The reasons of the Essayist were, 1st. That he has received credible accounts of this, transacted in a way exceedingly disparaging to that holy exercise. 2d. In the cases of young men intending for holy orders, it has given them wrong views of the preparation

called for, which they have lost sight of in the pursuit of an evanescent popularity. 3d. He thinks it not improbable that it may have an effect like that which Dr. Cotton Mather, in his "Magnalia," ascribes to the same cause in the early Churches of New England. He says, that some such young men being fluent in speech, and not qualified to enter the ministry because of the want of learning—a point on which great stress was laid by those Churches—were biassed to opinions propagated without that aid. To this cause the said Dr. Mather ascribes the secession in New England. The same cause has produced similar effects on our Church, and the instances of it would have been more numerous if the urgent claims of our congregations had not induced greater laxity than is desirable, in regard to literary qualifications for the ministry.

Eighthly. For the effects of a certain description of preaching, a passage was produced from the life of Mr. Jarratt. The Answerer considers the judgment of that clergyman as formed at an early age. It was so; but he delivered it as his mature opinion, about six years before his decease. The Essayist did not say when he was "near his grave," as reported by the Answerer. The latter affirms, that Mr. Jarratt had brought hundreds and thousands to a saving knowledge of the truth. There is no disposition to deny it; but what could have become of them when he lamented the prostrate state of religion generally over the country around him; that his communicants were reduced to one in ten; and that he had an audience seldom of one hundred and forty, and sometimes not half the number. Surely there is cause to fear, that the case was not unlike that of President Edwards, who, having excited what was called a revival among his flock in Northampton to such an extent, as that the whole town was pronounced to be under the converting grace, became a few years after-

wards generally obnoxious to parents, for attempting to restrain the gross licentiousness of their children; and a few years later was almost unanimously driven from his pastoral charge, because he insisted on examining candidates for the communion concerning their experiences. In the case of Mr. Jarratt, there was the aggravation of the decline of his popularity, that when his former followers deserted him, because he would not accompany them beyond the pale of his Church, they traduced his character. How many of the hundreds and the thousands continued pious after the desertion of their spiritual Father, is not here known. In proportion to their number, is the proof of the effect on the Episcopal Church, of a plan of devotional exercise, not in unison with any thing found in her institutions.

The Essayist is not unaware that sentiments of this sort are considered as hindering the work of God. Under the most awful sanctions he declares, that he has not this opinion of the work spoken of. That some who have been under it, were brought from a life of sin, and persisted in the paths of godliness, is not denied or doubted of. The same has happened after those meetings in which there are heard, what the Answerer professes to disapprove of—"violent shrieks of agony and obstreperous shouts of joy." The fair mode of testing the question, is, to take along with what is contended for, in either case, the many who become actuated by a fervour which subsides at last, leaving behind it indifference to religion, and not seldom surrendering them to infidelity; and to contrast with both, the many who are brought to a religious life by a preaching and praying that is according to truth and soberness; adorned by suitable practice, and due attention to pastoral duties. There is fruit produced in that way, which would probably not be acknowledged by the Answerer as the work of grace on the heart; while, per-

haps, much of what he would honour as such, will be resolved by into mere animal sensibility.

This has deluded many persons into the notion of their being pious, without any such evidence of it as is laid down in scripture. It has become common to denote such piety by the term "vital godliness," which is adopted by the Answerer; perhaps, as often happens, without having detected the source from which it has its origin. A new term occasionally starts up, sometimes for the expressing of established opinion, with the greater brevity; and sometimes, as in the present case, to denote a novelty. The term 'godliness,' implies vitality; otherwise, St. Paul would not have annexed to it 'the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.' There may be 'the form of godliness,' as is elsewhere intimated, or rather the appearance of it; which is the strict translation of the original word. But, both form and appearance out of the question, where the principle is sound, the power cannot be wanting. The primitive christians speak of godliness as up to the prescribed mark. It was so considered by the reformers of the Church of England, who have not said any thing of 'vital godliness,' in their institutions. It is comparatively a new thing in theology, requiring a new form to designate it. But the form being introduced, is found a convenient stone to be thrown at men whom there is a wish to disparage, but who cannot otherwise be assailed.

Is the Answerer seriously of opinion, that every assembly for the purpose of prayer, comes under the promise of the Saviour, to be with two or three whenever assembled in his name? If so, it sanctions every schism and every heresy from the first preaching of the gospel to the present day. When the Answerer speaks of the primitive christians as worshipping on other days than Sundays, and in other places than houses set apart

for religious worship, did he conceive of himself as combating any opinion maintained in the essay? The setting up of a man of straw for the pleasure of pulling him down, is an old device in controversy; but operates injuriously, by insinuating the want of sufficient interest taken in exercises of devotion, without hazarding an open charge of the deficiency.

It may attract attention, that the Essayist has not recognised his Answerer under the title assumed by him—"A Churchman of the Old School." The oldest days of Protestant churchmen, were those of Cranmer and his associates. The means of promoting religion, which the Answerer contends for, as intermediate to public and family worship, would have brought down on him the indignation of a government, who went hand in hand with these men in all the measures of the reformation. This is said, not with approbation of such an expedient for the suppression of irregularity; but, on the contrary, with sorrow that it should have been adopted.

The assumed title implies, at the least, that there was some early period in the history of the Church of England, in which it may be said of the meetings in question, that churchmen, to use the language of the Answerer, "laboured to promote them by extempore exhortation and prayer." On the contrary, it is a notorious fact, that such prayer, in organized assemblies, always proved a net to entangle the members of the Church into secession from her. It was conceded above, that this effect may have followed the succession of a pastor, who discountenanced what had been introduced by his predecessor. In the essay there was the supposed case of a non-Episcopalian minister, who, being an approver of a liturgy, should frame one for a portion of his flock, assembling with him in a room detached from their house of worship, and the appeal was made whether such a minister would not be

considered as undermining his communion. Let it be now further supposed, that after conducting worship on his own plan, for a considerable course of time, he has a successor hostile to the use of forms of prayer, whether in or out of Church; would it be a matter of wonder if the select flock of his predecessor, especially if he had possessed popular talents, should have become prepared for a membership of the Episcopal Church? The Answerer's fact is probable; but may be accounted for in harmony with the argument of the essay.

The Essayist, on a review of the subject, is induced to ask, whether there have not been all along a fallacy in the use of the expression 'prayer meetings?' One would suppose, that it intends meetings for prayer only, when nothing is said in the form of service or lecture. The Episcopal Church cherishes such meetings, in imitation of what were

called "stationary" in the primitive Church. Many pious persons have been attached to this institution while it has been attended on by very few who frequent prayer meetings, not accurately so called, since there is a mixture of instruction with extempore prayer; but who consider disallowance of these meetings, whatever attachment there may be to the other, as the evidence of indisposition to the holy exercise. It is here doubted, whether any other species of prayer meeting, conducted agreeably to its name, has been of long continuance. The prayer meetings established by our reformers, have maintained their stand in England, from generation to generation; and it will not be rash to predict, that in proportion to their estimation in the Episcopal Church in the United States, will be her abounding in that piety which is both rational and evangelical.

W. W.

THE CHURCHMAN.....No. I.

THE present time appears to be peculiarly favourable to a fair and impartial examination of the first claims of our Church. We say *peculiarly* favourable, because, until lately, no one has thought it at all necessary to state publicly his reasons for giving the preference to the Episcopal Church, surrounded as it is in this section of our country by such a great variety of sects. It is a blessing in a high degree peculiar to us, that the greatest freedom of opinion on religious topics is here enjoyed. It is our boast that we may worship God agreeably to the dictates of our own consciences—that we are unfettered by creeds and articles—and not obliged to give an assent to the religious sentiments of any man or body of men whatever. Still it is said, there does exist a denomination of christians, who state what they call the leading doctrines of the gospel

in a set of articles, and who proscribe certain forms of prayer to be used when we worship our Maker, and this is used as an argument against the Church of which we are members. Now, without entering into the discussion whether the articles as they now stand are or are not Calvinistic (which, by the way, appears to be the great objection to them in the minds of many) the design of the present paper is to state some of the advantages of having a liturgy, and of enquiring whether, on the whole, we are not more secure in our present situation than we should be in any other. A liturgy, we think, opposes a barrier to the introduction of false doctrines. The charge of a blind and bigoted attachment to a thing of human invention, is often brought against those who are attached to a liturgy on this ground. They are said to be enemies to free enquiry, but this is

not true. We venture the assertion that no body of christians can be found greater advocates for freedom of enquiry than the members of our Church. The spirit which governed them at the time they shook off the corruptions which had insensibly accumulated, still holds dominion. No appeals are made but to the law and to the testimony, and satisfied as we are that both as respects doctrine and discipline we move in harmony with the gospel, we venerate that which is so admirable a compendium of the one, and so kind a dispenser of the other. Other christians who differ from us on one or both of these points may lament indeed, that we hold to errors in doctrine as they think them to be—but while they are debating among themselves as to certain points, we may well be suffered to retain a perfect neutrality. The liturgy of the Church shows to the whole world what are the sentiments we entertain. We hold them in the fear of God. If others choose to hold them with us, we rejoice—if they depart from us, this is a subject for which they are accountable to God alone. We do indeed lament the absurdities into which christians have always run and view with sorrow the divisions which exist among them, but are still cheered by the hope that these things will restore reflecting men to that discipline by which the antient Church was grounded, and to those forms of devotion which experience has proved to be the most proper and the surest method of retaining the true faith in “the unity of spirit—in the bond of peace and in righteousness of life.”

It affords us no satisfaction that those who originally separated from the Church, or those who have been educated on the principles which governed their fathers, have found reason to complain of the want of a proper discipline and of too great liberty in treating of sacred things. The confusion which has resulted to them from one, and the licentiousness and infidelity which have deluged them from the

other—the extravagant zeal of some of their pious leaders and the cold indifference of others, are lasting subjects of regret. They go indeed to prove one thing, the superiority of the antient discipline over all others of more modern date, and the expediency and propriety of possessing a prescribed form of devotion. So far as these circumstances tend to bring christians together under the same government—so far they are hailed as favorable—but where these very causes of difference serve only to add fuel to the flame of party animosity we do most sincerely regret them. A great point for any set of men to gain, whether gathered together as christians or in any other way, is, that they be true to their principles. If satisfied with the correctness of the principles entertained by Episcopalians—let us on all occasions manifest our decided preference for them. To do this, we need not sacrifice our charity for others, but on the contrary exercise it the most when we do not intermeddle with their modes, and only remain true to our own. As respects the mode, the question is, do we think our own the best, (and that we do is evident from the open preference we give to it.) This question once decided will lead us to a course of conduct perfectly consistent with the principles of Episcopalians.

If we attach to public worship the importance which the subject most certainly demands we shall not consider it by any means a matter of indifference whether we join in one or another mode of worship. Could men lay aside their prejudices and bring themselves to a cool deliberation on the subject, there can be no doubt that the most decided preference would be given to that form which is not subject to the caprices of men—but which, under all circumstances always remains the same pure and uncontaminated channel for our prayers and praises to God. In speaking thus of the general principles of our Church, it may be well to add the remark that

as, where they are distinctly understood, they will always hold dominion—so where they are not all known, it becomes us, not from hostility to others, but from a proper regard to ourselves to confine ourselves exclusively to the Church. If we make a proper use of our bibles and prayer books there can be no doubt of our safety, but if we abandon the Church only occasionally for other places of worship where a liturgy is not known and where we are exposed to hear a great variety of doctrines preached, it is more than doubtful if any benefit result to us from it. On the contrary it is certain that our minds will be perplexed and our attention most needlessly divided. The *doctrines* which at present are advanced by different christians differ almost as widely from each other as do the men themselves. Experience has proved that there is scarcely any absurdity which men may not in some way or other bring themselves to believe, and in religion, no one can deny that men try to prove many absurdities by detached parts of scripture. As an evidence of the correctness of the principle of adhering to established discipline and usages, and not concerning ourselves with others, I trust I shall not at the present day be accused of favoring the sentiments of a sect when I only speak of their harmony and exemplary piety, in terms of the highest commendation. Through perils and persecutions the most trying, the society of *Friends* have set us an example worthy of consideration, and one which, considering our superior advantages we should improve upon. Much as we might desire a correction of many points, we admire their conscientious attachment to their forms and would hail with rapture a similar attachment among ourselves to our own peculiarities.

Had we any points unimportant to the general cause of christianity, which we were called on to concede to others—we should not hesitate for the promotion of christianity to yield them; but this is

not the case, and this being true, why should we not most zealously strive with a peaceable and quiet spirit to recommend the general subject of Episcopacy to others. This we can do, by attaching ourselves more closely to our liturgy—by observing more particularly its forms and by keeping ourselves on all occasions confined to the Church and its principles.

Another striking advantage which a prescribed form possesses over other modes of worship is that all people are enabled to know what petitions are to be presented in their behalf to the throne of grace. This is by no means an unimportant consideration. If we are satisfied that the truths of the gospel have been distorted and misrepresented by men who have aimed at distinction as the founders of sects, and the propagators of doctrines, until their time unknown and unheard of—we have no security that the like causes will not produce the like effects in our stated devotional exercises, if the conducting of them is left to the capricious taste of any individual whatever. One great object of public worship is to render religion familiar to the people—that they may have the opportunity of devoting one day in the week to acquiring instruction on those topics which are of lasting interest to them and information respecting those duties which the gospel demands of them. To render the acquisition of this information more easy than it otherwise would be, suitable persons are selected for dispensing it, that proper order may be observed in religious services, and to avoid the confusion which would ensue from a variety of instructors.—This is the only ground taken by some of our dissenting brethren—but we claim an higher one—We regard the institution of a stated and regular ministry as of *divine* appointment, and conceive that as such it is entitled to our reverence. Not that the public teachers are gifted with supernatural powers or are enlightened

more than others, except so far as their own laborious researches have yielded information—but that Christ has appointed distinct orders which it is our duty to recognize and protect. If our Saviour and his apostles deemed it important that there should be cultivated among his followers, a spirit of uniformity and consequently of peace, we may well view it as no immaterial thing, that we should use such means as are in our power to effect this most desirable object. Now by the established means of the Church all the designs of public worship are answered in the best possible manner. Her forms it is said are peculiar—but they are always the same—and those who object to forms and ceremonies practise them themselves, only not on precisely the same scale, nor in the same solemn and impressive manner.

This objection, which is sometimes made to the Church, is almost too idle to deserve a serious notice, and would not now be noticed at all, but from a wish to correct an impression which is most industriously strengthened among the ignorant on these subjects. The religion of Churchmen is frequently represented as consisting altogether in their forms and ceremonies, and an expression of attachment to the book of common prayer is with some an all-sufficient evidence that the persons making it are destitute of real religion. As to forms and ceremonies we have no more than are convenient and necessary to keep devotional feelings alive. They are not trusted to as the means of salvation, but we believe they are not unacceptable to that Being who should always be had in reverence and the worship of whom ought certainly to possess some distinguishing marks.—If responding be objected to because it is not practised by others, for I cannot imagine any other ground of objection, all we would pretend to say is—it is to be lamented that all christians should not feel a sufficient interest in the worship of God to be wil-

ling to take a proper part in it, and we wish it were much more general than it really is among Episcopalians. The beauty, the solemnity and the impressiveness of the service are not evident without a proper attention to it. There can be no posture in prayer more suitable than kneeling—none in praise more proper than standing, and for prayer and praise we assemble at Church. It is therefore certainly most proper that we resort to the most expressive methods, and until other christians produce a better form of public worship, we may and *should* express our warm attachment to our own by an increased attention to all its requirements.

The most important points of distinction between Episcopalians and other Christians, it is not now necessary to advert to, in relation to the principal subject of these *remarks*. The form of prayer is among the most *obvious*, and probably with many people it may appear to constitute the *only* difference between us and others. There cannot be any serious objection to it, considering the importance of public worship and the majesty of God. In our intercourse with men of eminent stations, there are but very few who would not prefer deliberating on their mode of address, and carefully weighing, if their worldly interest were concerned, every form of expression. Why our addresses to God should be made without at least an equal consideration it is difficult to imagine. If we deliberately set apart any portion of the time which God allows us, in obedience to his commands there can exist no reason why we should not *as* deliberately frame our addresses to Him, when we pray to Him to aid our infirmities and afford us strength sufficient to resist worldly temptations and fit us for heavenly blessings hereafter.

In bringing these remarks to a close I would only say, that whatever interest may be excited without the Church on the topics which have now been the sub-

ject of consideration, we have no reason for interesting ourselves either with one or the other party. The contest of the present day appears to turn on one particular doctrine, which it is known to the world, Episcopalians admit. It is not peculiar to them, but held likewise by others, and by far the greater part of professing christians. We esteem it a privilege for which we can never be sufficiently thankful to God to be protected in a certain and no *small* degree from controversy. Our liturgy and our discipline form a bond of union which we pray never may be broken. Whenever the peculiarities of our Church are attacked, every member of it will feel it to be a duty which he owes to the Being who established it to repel its adversaries, and if possible to convince them of their error; but when those who have wilfully separated from us, embroil themselves in controversy, it were madness for us to engage even on the right side of the question. All the important points of theology we conceive to be fairly settled, and we are not only content with that form and those expositions which, to our minds, *have* settled them, but devoutly bless God that he has been pleased to save us from those perplexing discussions with which other christians, who reject all discipline and have no stated form of worship, are harassed.

There is one question, of no small importance for such as are fond of controversy to settle. Do they enter the lists from the love and in the fear of God? We trust the leaders may—but are the hosts which follow governed by this—or by other motives? If they are not, let them pause and consider what it is they are doing—Men may arrive at a certain point of distinction by starting in a course which others have not pursued, but is this a sufficient compensation for the risk they run in trifling with sacred things. Will this, if acquired, calm their apprehensions when on the bed of sick-

ness; and light up the darkness of the grave? Ah no—it is only religion, “pure and undefiled,” which can do this. All earthly distinction is vain and foolish—the desire of it is *worse*—for it then sacrifice even their dearest interests, and by it soothe themselves into the belief that they are christians—when, in fact, they are far very far from the christian character.

Possessed as we are of every thing we could desire, to enable us to work out our salvation, let us engage in it as an affair of the greatest importance—leaving those questions, the discussion of which does not produce any christian feelings, but which serves to deaden all—let us even show to the world the sincerity of our faith by the purity of our works. It is the observation* of an eminent divine—“the truths of Christ crucified are the christian’s philosophy—and a good life the christian’s logic.”—The former we have—the latter we may practise. While with some there may exist an unusual excitement on religious topics, and with others there may be the same cold and heartless feeling that we daily see—let us exert ourselves to pursue the plain path of christian duty, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left—neither encouraging the wildness of the one, nor countenancing the coldness of the other, but in “simplicity and godly sincerity” worship him who is our God and strive to conform to the laws of his appointment. Our bible and our prayer-book are enough for us. The former points the way to heaven—the latter leads us in it.

It may be said of christianity as of all practical sciences—“it is not to be learned but in the way of action. The knowledge drawn from experience is altogether different from that which results from speculation. It is not the *opinion* but the *path* of the just that the wisest of men tells us shines more and more unto the perfect day.”

* *Sermon*, vol. i. page 234.

As christians the world has a right to expect and God requires a life of holiness, and in what the practice of good works consists there is happily no difficulty in determining. As members of or worshippers with the Episcopal Church, it is obviously our duty to yield a willing assent to all those appointments which aid devotion and prepare us by degrees for the second advent of its great found-

er—the Shepherd and the Bishop of souls. Strive then, as the apostle directed, Titus,* “in all things to show yourselves patterns of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned: that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you”.

* Titus ii. 7 and 8.

MISCELLANY.

EXCERPTA.

The following extract from an Election sermon, delivered in Boston, 27th May, 1702, by Dr. Increase Mather, conveys a lively picture of the time; it is a specimen of the quaint manner, in which they addressed the civil authority, and of the freedom with which they spake of their own high standing in the favour of God; it gives also some idea of the extent of clerical influence at that period.

“IF it be said, *but wherein may we promote the welfare of our people?*

The answer is, we may promote their welfare by endeavouring, that those evils may be reformed, which otherwise pull down the judgments of Heaven on our land. Have not the Heavens of late been weeping over our head, and threatening us with a terrible famine? We have cause to think, that one reason of it is, because *excess in drinking* is become the crying sin of multitudes in New England. There is among the Helvetians, (especially in Zurich) a Court, which bears the name of the *Court of reformation*, which effectually cures drunkards. I wish there were such a Court in New England.”

“And one thing let me in the name of the Lord commend to the General Assembly now convened. It is, that you would cause to be re-published, and to be recommended to posterity, the Platform of *Church discipline*, together with the result of the other Synods in this Colony, that so the generation coming on, may

not through ignorance degenerate or deviate from those Holy ways wherein their Fathers walked.* It was a pious design in those *Reubenites*, who first came into the land of Canaan, when they built an altar of witness, that so their children in future generations *might not cease fearing the Lord*. Who knows, but what is now in the name of the Lord proposed to you, may be a means to cause your children after you to fear and serve the Lord, in the way which himself has commanded. Now you have an opportunity for it, and it may be, now is your only time to do this service for the welfare of the present and succeeding generations.”

“To those, whom the providence of God shall this day establish as Rulers, let me say, yet not I, but the Lord. Consider this people is the Lord's people. Therefore, bear with their manners and infirmities, for the Lord's sake, and *seek their wealth* with all your might. I have often thought on what I heard a worthy man and a great friend of New England speak to the President of the King's most honourable privy Council. I, (said he) know the people of New England very well; I was once there, I know they are a *weak people and full of humours*. Nev-

* *Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur cum illis. Hei mihi, *** quantum mutatus ab illo!*

ertheless they are a people, that belong to God; and therefore let me pray your Lordship to be kind to them, and the God of Heaven will reward you for it. So let me say to Councillors, to Ministers, to Representatives, and to others also, do all that you can to promote the welfare of the *dear people* in New England, because many of them are *dear to God*, who has purchased them with his own blood. Then Christ will take what you have done to them, as done to himself. All the men in the world will believe this to be true, in that day, which is at hand, when we shall all see Jesus Christ the Son of God, sitting on the throne of his glory, and hear him pronounce these words, with which I conclude, (Math. xxv. 40,) *Verily, inasmuch as ye have done it to these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*"

The same venerable Divine in a sermon delivered at a Thursday lecture in the same year, which he prints, assigning as a reason for printing, that this was the last time he should preach on that occasion, on account of the infirmities of age, and the ill treatment which he had received from those, from whom he had reason to expect better, communicates at the close the following intelligence.

"**PAPISTS** have boasted of their Xaverins, who they say was an instrument of converting many thousands of the East Indians, for which cause the Pope canonized him: and in their books they reflect on Protestants, pretending that the like was never done by those whom they call heretics. But alas, we may say of what they have done, as Christ said to the Scribes and Pharisees, (Matthew xxiii. 15,) *You compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, you make him twofold more the child of Hell, than yourselves.* The Jesuits' converts are converted, not to Christ, but to antichrist: they have taught them to be idolaters, and have obtruded a false gospel on them. Xavier has inserted diverse fictitious things concerning Christ, and concerning the apostle Peter, which

he procured to be translated into the Persian tongue for the service of the Great Mogul. Another Jesuit has added to the gospel, the story of the assumption and coronation of the Virgin Mary. Thus have they corrupted the word of God with their own inventions, deluded the miserable heathen thereby, whom they have made more obstinate in their false belief, than if they were Pagans still. *Protestants dare not teach any thing, but what is according to scripture.* And it has pleased God to bless their endeavours with wonderful success within these few years past amongst the East Indians. In the kingdom of Jessanapatman, (the district of Jaffna) the Lord has prospered the labours of five Dutch Ministers so as that above an hundred and forty thousand of those Indians have embraced the christian Protestant Religion. And since that in four years time, forty thousand more of them are become christians, renouncing the idols whom they and their fathers worshipped. Moreover in Amboina there are thirty thousand souls, who have lately subjected themselves to the Lord Jesus Christ, although, (which is marvellous) many of them were Mahometans. Of these things I have had certain advice from a learned professor, Dr. Leusden, in the University of Utrick in Holland, who received the account of them from the ministers concerned in this glorious work."

"There has also of late been a notable conversion of Jews to the christian religion. In the city of Hamburg, several hundreds of Jews, some of them Rabbis, have by the happy endeavours of one Divine, (viz. Dr. Esdras Edzard,) been brought off from their Judaism to christianity. All these converts have been brought to own Christ within these seven years last past. The like has not been known since the days of the apostles. May we not then hope, that what is promised concerning the conversion

of the Israelitish nation will ere long be gloriously accomplished."

It is now upwards of a century, since this intelligence was announced; and the glorious day, to which this seemed to be the harbinger, has not as yet appeared. The Doctor's information appears to have been imperfect, notwithstanding the authority from which it came. The fact was, that missionaries had been actively and to all appearance successfully employed fifty years before; and it is well known, that the Island of Ceylon, of which Jaffna, is a district, has been a very interesting theatre of missionary labours from that to the present time; yet the result is rather calculated to damp than to animate us in these pious undertakings. We have always been of opinion, that a nation must be civilized, and well governed, before it can be christianized; and that regular establishments must accompany the preached word to render it permanent and truly efficacious among those rude and illiterate nations. In this idea we are confirmed by the course of events in this interesting island. "It appears on investigation, (say the Editors of the *Christian Observer*) that the native Protestants of Ceylon, are about one hundred and fifty thousand, and the Roman Catholics about fifty thousand. This report of numbers falls far short of former representations; nor can it be doubted, that multitudes of the inhabitants have of late years relapsed into idolatry. In the time of the Dutch government, there were between three and four hundred temples dedicated to Pagan deities; in the year 1807, they amounted to twelve hundred! In 1663 the christians in the district of Jaffna alone were sixty-five thousand. By the last returns it appears that there are not five thousand." Thus in a little more than a century, notwithstanding the efforts of missionaries have been increased apparently an hundred fold, the number of converts has decreased in the proportion of *sixty-five* to *five*—i. e. they are reduced to one thirteenth part of their original number.

The following account of their conversion and character is from a sketch of *Missions* by Miron Winslow, missionary to Ceylon.

"THE Dutch in all their principal settlements established their religion and sent out missionaries to officiate. In Ceylon, they required all their subjects

to subscribe the Helvetic Confession of faith, or be incapable of any place of profit or trust. By a great number of ministers and school-masters, they taught multitudes to repeat the Lord's prayer and the ten commandments, a morning and evening prayer, and to say grace before and after meals; and they who could do this were baptized. Thus whole districts, almost, became christians. In 1688, of the inhabitants in Jaffnapatam, amounting to two hundred and seventy-eight thousand seven hundred and fifty-nine, no less than one hundred and eighty thousand three hundred and sixty-four were said to have been converted in the last four years. Dr. Leusden informs us, that about this time the Dutch ministers in Ceylon had baptized three hundred thousand of the natives. We may well suppose, that these converts resembled those of the Church of Rome, as well in character as in number. Indeed this is evident from the fact, that at this day with a nominal profession of christianity, they are mere Pagans!"

THERE are a few errors in the following sentences from an article in the *Christian Disciple*, purporting to be a Review of "Wyatt and Sparks on Episcopacy," which we beg leave to correct—

"Propose in some places where the Church is in power to send but a few Bibles to the east or west and the cry *ecclesia in periculo!* is up. The scriptures and the service book are brought out tied together, and like the customers of the speculator in the stores who dealt in commodities of various worth, the hungry for religious instruction must take both or neither."

Now much as we venerate the book of common prayer, we were entirely ignorant of the fact above stated—that any churchman is weak enough to imagine that the Bible could not be trusted alone, or that the prayer book was ever sent with it but for the purpose of aiding in the exercise of those devotional feelings

which a perusal of the scriptures might excite. There may be strong objections to some parts of the liturgy in the mind of the person who penned the sentence above quoted, but he surely will admit that a perusal of it *may*, under God, excite to a more attentive reading of the scriptures. But we believe churchmen may be found in most of our Bible Societies who very seldom think it necessary to send a prayer book wherever they send a bible, though they might prefer that the persons benefitted by the one should also have the advantage of the other to *quicken* their devotions. We rejoice to find that the bible does good, whether precisely in our way or not—and we know that its circulation *does* good, whether it makes men Baptists, or Presbyterians, or Congregationalists—if it makes them christians it is enough. As to the advantages of our peculiar forms or the justice of our claims, every man must judge for himself, with the bible before him, we will even say *without* the prayer book. If the editors of the Disciple know of any place in this country where a different spirit exists, we would thank them to point it out to us.

The following appears as a note to the sentence above quoted.

"The manner in which churchmen speak of their liturgy is sometimes to the last degree extraordinary. Dr. Mayhew quotes a Dr. Bearcroft, who, in a

sermon preached in 1744, before the society for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts, congratulated his associates that "the word of God grew mightily and prevailed in New England according to the liturgy of the Church of England."

On turning to that sermon, we find that Dr. Mayhew did not quote altogether fairly. The meaning of the writer was evidently to congratulate his brethren on the success of the Episcopal Church in a country planted by bitter dissenters from it. The Christian Disciple now and then congratulates the community on the success of Unitarian principles—and Dr. Bearcroft meant no more in favour of his Church than the Unitarians do when they thus speak of theirs. But for the quotation—

"Could the society in prudence and justice to the pressing desires of the other colonies answer the importunate demands of this very populous province (New England) for new missionaries, they must at least double the number, *so mightily grows the word of God*, and *prevails* according to the liturgy of the Church of England in this province which was originally planted by dissenters from it of various names."

DOMESTIC RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

(Continued from page 97.)

NEW-YORK.

THE diocese of New York consists at present, of the bishop, fifty-six presbyters, fifteen deacons, and one hundred and eighteen organized congregations.

Since the last general convention, twenty-four persons have been admitted by the bishop of this diocese, to the holy order of deacons.

Within the same period, fourteen deacons have been ordered priests:—and six clergymen have been instituted to rectorships.

A number of the clergy of this diocese continue to prosecute the arduous and all important labours of the missionary service. Besides older missionaries, whose names appear in the last triennial report, there have been engaged in this service, since the last general convention, the Rev. Amos Pardee, from Massachusetts, the Rev. George H. Norton, the Rev. Leveret Bush, deacon, the Rev. Deodatus Babcock, deacon, and the Rev. Francis H. Cuming, deacon, from New Jersey.

Since the last general convention, this

diocese has been deprived by the death, of the Rev. Henry Moscrop, the Rev. John Bowden, D. D. the Rev. William H. Northrop, deacon, the Rev. Theodosius Bartow, and the Rev. Barzillai Bulkley. But a still more afflicting source of the diminution of its clergy, has been found in the painful necessity of exercising ecclesiastical discipline, by the suspension from the ministry of the Rev. Timothy Clowes, and the Rev. Nathan Felch; and the degradation of Thomas Y. How, previously suspended under the 2d canon of the general convention of 1817.

There have been duly organized in this diocese, and received into union with its convention, fifteen new Churches. Fifteen have also been consecrated by the Bishop: one of which called St. Philip's Church, in New York, has been erected for the accommodation of the coloured members of the Church in that city; and another called St. Peter's Church, at Oneida castle, Oneida county, for a congregation which is composed of Indians, and in which there is used a translation of our liturgy in the Mohawk language.

The reports of the missionaries and parochial clergy, published in journals of the last three conventions, furnish an aggregate of four thousand six hundred and eighty-nine baptisms, of which four hundred and nine are specified as cases of adults, and eighty-seven of Indians. The aggregate number of confirmations is not given in the journals of 1817 and 18. In 1819 the bishop reported one thousand four hundred and seventy-four. In that and the previous year, he confirmed one hundred and forty-five Indians. The number of communicants reported at the last convention, is four thousand two hundred and thirty-five.

No small share of the prosperity of this diocese is to be ascribed to missionary services. The number of labourers at present engaged in them is fifteen. The peculiar situation of the immense por-

tion of the diocese, formed by the western district of the state, renders these services indispensable, and should excite our brethren in New-York to increasing exertions in their support; while the similarity of cases between that section of their state and the new states and territories of our Union, should command for these services, as intimately connected with the duty of extending missionary labours to the latter, the approbation of the Church generally.

It is proper that we here notice the efforts made by our brethren of this diocese, for the religious instruction of the Indians, within the borders of their state. The Oneida tribe have now a handsome and commodious Church, and are still enjoying the faithful services of their licensed catechist and lay-reader, Mr. Eleazar Williams, who is himself of Indian extraction, and a candidate for holy orders. He leads their devotion in their Church, by the use of a translation of our liturgy into the Mohawk language, in which they join with every appearance of devout attention, and with the full effect of proper participation. A young Indian of the Onondaga tribe, son of a chief, who was killed in the service of the United States, during the last war, is now making suitable preparation for devoting ardent piety, great zeal, and natural talents of a most respectable order, to the work of the ministry among his countrymen.

The congregations of this diocese receive frequent visits from the bishop. The clergy are generally distinguished for conscientious observance of the canons and rubrics of the Church. The laity, in conjunction with their pastors, have formed numerous associations for distributing the Holy Bible, the book of Common Prayer, and other approved religious books and tracts; for aiding the ecclesiastical authority in the support of missionaries; and for the interesting and inestimable charity of Sunday-school instruction.

Upon the whole, we have reason to be thankful for the continuance of the divine blessing to this portion of our Zion, and to hope that it proves, in some good degree, instrumental in that promotion of the glory of God, of the interests of evangelical piety, and of the eternal welfare of the human race, for which the Church of God was established.

(To be continued.)

[From the *Gallia, Ohio, Gazette.*]

NEW THEOLOGICAL PUBLICATION.

A work, to be entitled "THE CHRISTIAN'S GUIDE IN THE WEST," is proposed to be published at Worthington, Ohio, to be edited by the Rev. *Philander Chase*, Jun. and others, of the Protestant Episcopal Church. We should be happy to give the excellent address of the Editors entire, did our limits allow it.

The reasons for undertaking such a work are thus given in their Address to the Christian Public:—

"The situation of the Diocese of Ohio, and of churchmen in the western states generally, is peculiar. Precluded, by their remoteness, from access to those fountains, which diffuse so much religious light among our brethren of the Eastern states, a care correspondent to this peculiarity is necessary to attain that kind of knowledge which will enable them to give a reason of the faith they profess, as well to those who differ from them in religious forms, as to those who have no faith in common with them. The great expense, and the uncertainty of a regular transmission of religious journals and magazines from the eastward, have deterred many from attempting to procure them: the effect has been, that the doctrines of the Church are not so well understood as they ought to be; and many, perhaps many of her own children, have not yet discovered the excellence of her forms, or the strength and sound reasons of her faith."

In the liberal spirit of their communion, the Editors observe—

"In guarding the members of her own communion from errors on religious

points, the Church fights, not as wounding others, but *so as in defence*; not to cast down others, but that *her children* may "lay hold on eternal life." With the infidel the Church is indeed at open war, as well in attack, as in defence. To enable our brethren to fight against such, it will be our humble task to furnish them with the weapons which others have sharpened and polished."

We heartily wish the Rev. Editor and his associates a degree of success equal to their zeal and ability, and the importance of the cause in which they are engaged.

REV. MR. BOWERS, formerly Rector of the Church in Gardiner, (Maine,) and afterwards of St. Michael's Church, Marblehead, has lately published a volume, comprising twenty-three sermons of his own composition, and two occasional sermons by Jacob Norton, A. M.—Mr. Bowers' sermons are short, but sententious, sensible and well written; and are in general interesting, impressive and instructive. The addition of the two sermons by Mr. Norton, is, we believe, generally regretted as a blemish to the volume; especially as neither on account of style or doctrine were they entitled to a place in such company.

E. J. COALE, of Baltimore, has published a selection from the metrical psalms, with hymns, suited to the worship of the Church. We have not seen the work; but from its having been executed under the eye and with the approbation of the Bishop of Maryland, we are prepared to expect, that it will meet the wishes generally of those, who have been desirous of making improvement in this part of the book of common prayer.

THE consecration of the new Church in Gardiner, is fixed for the 12th inst. A visit of the Bishop may of course be expected in the Eastern section of the Diocese, should his health permit.

POETRY.

SELECTED FROM MORAL PIECES IN PROSE AND VERSE

BY LYDIA HUNTLEY.

PROCRASTINATION.

“**L**IVE well to day”—a spirit cries,
To day be good—to day be wise;
But something inward seems to tell,
Another day will do as well.

“Now is the time—the accepted time,”
Speaks audibly a page sublime;
Another creed is heard to say,
Wait till a more convenient day.

Enquir’st thou which of these is truth?
Which to obey—unwary youth?
Go—ask of nature in thy walk,
The rose-bud, dying on its stalk,
The fading grass—the withering tree,
Are emblems of thy fate and thee.
Ask of the stream or torrent hoarse,
To linger in its wonted course;
Ask of the bird to stay its flight.
Bid the pale moon prolong her light,
And listen to their answering tone,
“A future day is not our own.”

And is it thine? Oh, spurn the cheat,
Resist the smooth—the dire deceit;
Lest, while thou dream’st of long delay,
Thine hour of action pass away,
Thy prospects fade—thy joys be o’er,
Thy time of hope return no more.

Ask of the Roman—pale with fear,
While judgment thunder’d in his ear,
Who to the warning friend could say
“I’ll hear thee on a future day;”
Ask him if Time confirm’d his claim,
Or that good season ever came?

Go, ask of him, whom demons urge
To leap this dark world’s dizzy verge,
Who on his thorny pillow pain’d,
Sees no reprieve or pardon gain’d.
Oh! ask that dying man the price
Of one short hour of thoughtless vice;
What would he pay—what treasure give,
For one brief season more to live,

One hour to spend in anxious care,
In duty, penitence, and prayer!

Ask of the grave; a voice replies—
“No knowledge, wisdom, or device,”
Beauty, or strength, possess the gloom,
Where thou shalt find thy narrow home.

Delay no longer; lest thy breath
Should quiver in the sigh of death;
But inward turn thy thoughtful view,
And what thy spirit dictates—do.

REGARD DUE TO THE FEELINGS OF OTHERS.

THERE is a plant that in its cell,
All trembling seems to stand,
And bend its stalk, and fold its leaves,
From each approaching hand.

And thus there is a conscious nerve,
Within the human breast,
That from the rash or careless hand,
Shrinks, and retires—distrest.

The pressure rude, the touch severe,
Will raise within the mind,
A nameless thrill, a secret tear,
A torture undefin’d.

O you, who are by nature form’d,
Each thought refin’d to know,
Repress the word, the glance, that wakes
That trembling nerve to woe.

And be it still your joy to raise
The trembler from the shade,
To bind the broken, and to heal
The wounds you never made.

When e’er you see the feeling mind,
Oh, let this care begin,
And though the cell be rude or low,
Respect the guest within.